

Message Text

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ORIGIN COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-09 IO-13 ISO-00 EB-07 EPA-04 STR-04

DOT-00 OES-06 /056 R

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EPA:OIA:CKLEVE O (PHONE)

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STATE:EA:J:DSMITH (PHONE)

STR:HLAWRENCE (SUBSTANCE)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USDEL MTN GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, JA

SUBJECT: JAPANESE PRESS REPORTS ON AUTO IMPORT PROBLEM

REF: TOKYO 13327

1. IN REGARD TO THE ALLEGATION IN THE YOMIURI SHIMBUN
ARTICLE THAT USEPA CLEARANCE OF VEHICLES TAKES SIX TO EIGHT
MONTHS, AN EPA SPOKESMAN STATED THAT THE NORMAL TIME
REQUIRED TO COMPLETE EMISSIONS TESTING IS THREE DAYS FROM
TIME VEHICLE IS RECEIVED BY EPA. CLAIM OF ADDITIONAL TIME
MAY ARISE FROM EPA REQUIREMENT THAT PROTOTYPES OF NEW
MODELS MUST ACCUMULATE AT LEAST FIFTY THOUSAND MILES
(50,000) PRIOR TO EMISSION TESTING TO EVALUATE DURABILITY O
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THE EMISSIONS CONTROL SYSTEM. TO OBTAIN THIS AMOUNT OF

MILEAGE, EPA ESTIMATES, WOULD TAKE A MINIMUM OF THREE MONTH

2. THE ACCUMULATION OF THE 50,000 MILES IS DONE NOT BY EPA BUT BY THE MANUFACTURER IN WHATEVER MANNER IT PREFERENCES. ALSO, THE 50,000 MILES REQUIREMENT IS APPLIED ONLY TO NEW MODELS; A NEW MODEL IS A VEHICLE WHICH CONTAINS AN ENTIRELY NEW ENGINE OR EMISSIONS SYSTEM WHICH HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN TESTED BY EPA. IN CONTRAST TO CURRENT MOT PROCEDURES, A MANUFACTURER MAY SATISFY THE REQUIREMENT BY SUBMITTING A PRE-PRODUCTION OR PROTOTYPE MODEL IF THE ENGINE

AND EMISSIONS SYSTEM ARE IDENTICAL TO THOSE CONTAINED IN SUBSEQUENT PRODUCTION MODELS. VEHICLES OF A NEW MODEL YEAR CONTAINING ENGINES AND EMISSIONS SYSTEMS THAT HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN TESTED BY EPA MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR ADDITIONAL TESTING BUT WITH AN ACCUMULATION OF ONLY FOUR THOUSAND (4000) MILES.

3. EPA COULD DETERMINE NO FURTHER BASIS FOR THE "SIX TO EIGHT MONTHS" FIGURE BEYOND THE MANUFACTURER USING THAT MUCH TIME TO ACCUMULATE THE 50,000 MILES. EPA KNOWS OF NO CASE IN WHICH THE 50,000 MILE REQUIREMENT HAS DELAYED THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW JAPANESE MODEL AND HAS RECEIVED

NO COMPLAINTS FROM JAPANESE MANUFACTURERS ABOUT THE REQUIREMENT.

4. ALTHOUGH THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS PRIMARILY INTENDED FOR BACKGROUND, EMBASSY MAY AT ITS DISCRETION INFORM APPROPRIATE GOJ MINISTRIES. AS EMBASSY IS AWARE, ERIC STORK, DIRECTOR OF EPA'S EMISSION CONTROL PROGRAM WILL BE IN JAPAN FROM SEPTEMBER 28 TO OCTOBER 2 TO DISCUSS WITH THE GOJ POSSIBLE COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL AREA. STORK IS WILLING, IF EMBASSY THINKS IT USEFUL, TO DISCUSS THE CLEARANCE ISSUE FURTHER WITH GOJ OFFICIALS OR PRESS. STORK IS LEAVING IMMEDIATELY FOR OTHER FOREIGN STOPS BEFORE TOKYO SO EMBASSY SHOULD WAIT TO DISCUSS MATTER DIRECTLY WITH HIM UPON HIS ARRIVAL IN JAPAN. HABIB

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